



**Farmers  
Working Together**

**For a Clean  
Lake Champlain &  
Thriving Agriculture**

**May-June 2017**

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**Or scan our QR Code HERE:**



**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Fellow Directors and Members,

As we all wait for some much-needed sun and drier weather patterns, we had to postpone our spring bus tour with Legislators. **The new date is June 13<sup>th</sup>.** As you have been informed, they were called back into session over the budget and would have not been available to attend the previously scheduled tour in May. We hope that the new date will be in a time frame that we all will be in the fields still doing some planting and or manure incorporation for demonstrations. Nate and Kirsten will be following up with those that were going to host visits and to make sure you are still able to host the tour at your farms. If you haven’t yet, sign up to participate all day or even for just one stop to talk to tour participants.

We continue to participate in the Agency of Agriculture's RAP Development Committee, providing feedback on specific parts of the RAPs, how they affect farmers and what the logistics will be to implement the rules in a practical manner. So far we have looked at floodplain rules and buffers.

Many of us MFO’s have been having our inspections and meeting our new coordinators, speaking for myself ours went pretty well. On that note, we will be having Secretary Tebbetts and Deputy Secretary Eastman for a visit to discuss relations with the Agency. The tentative date is May 31<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 at the UVM Extension Middlebury office. I realize that these meetings will be a challenge for most with the delay of spring work, and the pressure of planting and harvesting hitting at the same time, but our opinions and views are important to share with the two secretaries. So, if you can find the time, please attend.

Lastly hope for some sun and heat and be safe.

**Brian Kemp, President**



*CVFC has support from the UVM Extension Crop, Soil & Pasture Team,  
the High Meadows Fund, and the Keep Local Farms Fund*

## CALENDAR— May/June 2017



- TBA**      **Crop Patrol: Roller-Crimpers in Organic & Conventional Production.**  
Foster Bros. Farm, Middlebury VT
- May 31**    **CVFC Meeting with VAAFM Leadership**  
UVM Extension Middlebury, 10:00am-12:00pm
- June 7**     **CVFC Monthly Board & Member Meeting:** UVM Extension  
Middlebury, 10am – 12:00pm
- June 13**    **CVFC Spring Bus Tour Celebrating Local Farm Conservation Efforts.** Starts in Richmond, VT,  
9:30am—3:45pm
- June 17**    **Breakfast on the Farm:** Fairmont Farm, East Montpelier VT
- June 27**    **Crop Patrol: Woodchip Heavy Use Area & Pasture Walk:** Kenyon Farm, Waitsfield VT,  
5:00pm—7:00pm
- July 1**      **VAAFM Small Farm Certification Program goes into effect.** Rules requiring small farms have  
a Nutrient Management Plan and certify they are following the RAPs go into effect.

**Want more information about any of these events? Call Nate @ (802) 388-4969 x348**

### Breakfast on the Farm Needs YOU!

For the third year in a row, Vermont Breakfast on the Farm is inviting the public to learn more about their local dairy farms and about agriculture. Last year over 2,000 people came to visit the host farms (Green Mountain Dairy and Nea-Tocht Farm). This year CVFC founding members, Blue Spruce Farm in addition to Fairmont Farm are hosting this popular event. The planning committee is still looking for volunteers, and especially those directly connected to the farming community to help on the day of the events. You can visit the website or contact them at [vermontbreakfastonthefarm@gmail.com](mailto:vermontbreakfastonthefarm@gmail.com). You can also contact CVFC's Dairy Outreach Coordinator, Louise Waterman at (802) 373-3352 or [lwalshwaterman@gmail.com](mailto:lwalshwaterman@gmail.com) if you would like to volunteer.

<b>June 17th</b>	<b>Fairmont Farm</b>	<b>East Montpelier</b>
<b>July 22nd</b>	<b>Blue Spruce Farm</b>	<b>Bridport</b>

### CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!



<b>June 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>July 22<sup>nd</sup></b>
<b>Fairmont Farm</b>	<b>Blue Spruce Farm</b>
<b>East Montpelier</b>	<b>Bridport</b>

We need your help and knowledge at the Breakfast on the Farm events this year!  
Interested in volunteering? Visit [www.vermontbreakfastonthefarm.com/volunteers](http://www.vermontbreakfastonthefarm.com/volunteers) to sign up or contact [vermontbreakfastonthefarm@gmail.com](mailto:vermontbreakfastonthefarm@gmail.com) for more info.



### Supporting Business Member Spotlight:

#### *Matthew's Trucking LLC & Custom Manure Handling*

Matthew & Eric Severy are founding members of the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition. Their knowledge of farming, manure handling and equipment is a valuable resource to our organization. They are dedicated service providers that are conscientious stewards of the water and land. They help forward the education mission of our organization, always willing to demonstrate knowledge and equipment to farmers and the public. Eric was even highlighted on a recent episode of *Across the Fence* on WCAX talking about the new manure applicator certification requirements. They also have partnered with UVM Extension to trial A new shallow slot grassland manure injector on farms in the Champlain Valley.

**THANK YOU MATTHEW & ERIC SEVERY FOR YOUR SUPPORT & LEADERSHIP!**

## Farmer Member Spotlight: *Bonaspecta Holsteins*

by Kirsten Workman

Rob & Suzy Hunt own and operate Bonaspecta Holsteins in Addison, Vermont. A Medium Farm Operation (MFO) dairy, they also raise beef cows and pigs that they market directly and through Green Pasture Meats. Anyone who has ever been to their farm or talked with Rob knows that they take a very pragmatic approach to farming.

Starting with 20 cows in New Haven Mills in 1985, relocating to Weybridge two years later and finally landing at their permanent location on Jersey Street in Addison in 1989, they steadily grew their herd to the almost 300 cows they milk today. One thing that sets Rob & Suzy apart from many of their conventional MFO counterparts is that during the summer, they rotationally graze their milking herd through pastures surrounding the farm. If you ask Rob why they graze, he'll tell you that when they started grazing about 100 cows in 1992 they really didn't have any harvest equipment and custom harvest businesses where few and far between back then. It just 'made sense' to let the cows do the work. After a couple of decades of grazing, they have fine-tuned their system to make it the most efficient system possible. Rob has figured out the best ratio of water tubs to cows, getting water to every paddock, how big to size his paddocks, and how to make grazing work for his herd.

In addition to grazing, the meat animals also 'just make sense' for Rob and Suzy's operation. Pigs utilize a lot of 'other stuff' on the farm that would otherwise go to waste. They also match nicely with the existing labor, workload and equipment. He can mix a batch of pig feed with the same feed wagon he uses to feed the dairy cows and is more efficient along the way. Similarly, the beef cows fill a niche as he can utilize his lower producing cows to breed to beef breeds and uses cows that might otherwise be culled by grafting 2-3 beef calves and using them as nurse cows.

Rob & Suzy are participating in UVM Extension research and demonstration projects, hosting gypsum, cover crop and short season corn trials. They also will help assess the utilization of no-till planting compared to conventional tillage this spring. As Rob says, "someone's gotta do it" or how will we figure out if and how it can work here in the challenging soils of the Champlain Valley. Rob values seeing how many of the practices CVFC promotes work on real farms and points out that he was skeptical of cover cropping. However, when he went to another CVFC farm for a field day to look at cover crops, he knew that farm wouldn't be trying it if it wasn't worth doing. After seeing it for himself, he was willing to try it on his own farm and let other farmers learn something along the way.

Rob values the role CVFC plays in connecting farmers and enabling them to share information between each other. He sees the importance of the outreach to the public, so they can see that farmers are not the enemy but doing their part to help the Lake and also just have a better understanding of farming in general. He also appreciates the directors who act as spokespeople for the members and, as Rob says, "deliver the message more smoothly" than he would be apt to.



### Program Highlight: Manure Applicator Training

The UVM Extension Champlain Valley Crop, Soil & Pasture Team and the Northwest Soil and Crops Program, in cooperation with the Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition held two Manure Training workshops for Farmers and Custom Applicator Employees in Shoreham and in Pawlet. The event was a continuation of a Manure training series held in February for Custom Applicators. The total attendance at the two workshops was 78 individuals. The topics included an overview on the RAPs, interpreting an

NMP, Recordkeeping Requirements when Spreading Manure, and Spreading Manure in Less than Ideal Conditions. This event was very successful. After the meeting in Pawlet, one farmer commented on how he agrees with everything that was presented, but the Agencies have to remember that sometimes farmers are put in a tough position where in order to get field work done they have to take some risks. These events were a great way to start a conversation with the farming community about how we can all do a better job managing the nutrients on our farms.

## Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition Inc.

### Board of Directors

**Brian Kemp**, *President* - Mountain Meadows Farm Inc.

**Marie Audet**, *Vice President*—Blue Spruce Farm

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**Lorenzo Whitcomb**, No. Williston Cattle Co.

**Loren Wood**, Woodnotch Farm, Inc.

### Staff

**Nate Severy**, Program Coordinator

**Louise Waterman**, Outreach Coordinator

## FROM THE FIELD



*No-till alfalfa standing tall at Lucas Dairy in Orwell, Vermont.  
Photo by R. Balzano. May 18 2017*

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